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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

REPORT

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COUNTRY

Germany (Russian Zone)

DATE DISTR. 23 May 1952

SUBJECT

Chemical Warfare Agents Stocked at Ammunition
Depot in Kapen

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CIRCULATE

SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

50X1-HUM

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1. In October 1951, [] ordered by the Hygiene Department of the Soviet Zone Ministry of Health to investigate the status of the chemical warfare agents stockpiled in the area of the former German ammunition depot at Kapen. High ranking Soviet Army officers, and representatives of the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Heavy Industry as well as the Ministry of Economics of Land Saxony-Anhalt were present at the conference where the implementation of this order was discussed. The Soviet officers stressed the necessity of a speedy disposal of the chemical warfare agents, as their storage space would be required for the storage of ammunition. 50X1-HUM
2. [] about 60 tons of mustard gas and sternutators were stored at the chemical warfare agents section of the Kapen depot in mid-March 1952. About 100 iron drums with a capacity of 200 liters each were stored above ground, while the remainder was being kept in underground containers. The chemical warfare agents were still effective. However, they could not be used in shells because they had become impure.
3. Prior to the end of the war, chemical warfare agents were stored and refilled at Kapen. In early 1947, most of the surface installations of the gas depot were demolished by the Soviets. At the same time, undetermined quantities of chemical warfare agents were shipped by them in railroad tank cars to some undetermined place. According to Soviet officers, the chemical warfare agents were dropped in the Baltic Sea. This operation was the cause of the rumor circulating among the local population that chemical munitions were being manufactured at Kapen. 50X1-HUM
4. At first, [] investigations at Kapen without protective equipment. In late 1951, former German Army protective equipment was provided. Work on the construction of a decontamination chamber according to the design of the German Army was also started. The Ministry of Economics in Halle ordered the Gaerungschemie firm (Zymotechnological plant) in Dessau to send a labor detail of 40 men and a decontamination squad of 3 men headed by Herr Hahn (fnu), a former German Army master sergeant (Ord) to Kapen. It was planned at first to perform the decontamination by means of calcium chloride. This substance

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was not available in adequate quantities, and orders were given to have the chemical warfare agents burned. It was resolved to build a special chamber in the area of the depot and to burn the gas after admixing beet-root spirit. The total cost of disposing of the chemical warfare agents was estimated at five to six million eastmarks, and the cost of the beet root spirit was estimated at 100,000 eastmarks.

5. In mid-March, [] checking the soil of the depot area for signs of contamination. The results of the analysis will have to be transmitted to the Ministry of Economics in Halle, and to the Gacrunyschemic firm in Dessau. []

[] in mid-1951, [] unconfirmed information indicating that experiments were being made at the Electro-Chemical plant in Bitterfeld with products similar to chemical warfare agents. Only a few experts in the field of chemical warfare are said to be still available in the Soviet Zone of Germany. *

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- * [] Comment. As chemical warfare agents were stored at the ammunition depot at Kapen during World War II, the existence there of minor stocks of gas is possible. [] statement that these stocks were unsuitable for further use is believed to be correct. The shipping of chemical warfare agents, allegedly to be dumped in the Baltic Sea, was also reported from other former German ammunition depots in 1947 and 1948. No information on the production of chemical warfare agents or pertinent research work has been received. It is believed improbable that the Soviets should store chemical warfare agents in Germany.

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